

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

**600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0360**

Request for Proposal (RFP)

BUSINESS CLIMATE STUDY

RFP Number: 160-12-05

Date of Issue: December 9, 2005

Purpose of RFP: North Dakota Legislative Council (NDLC) and Department of Commerce (DOC) are seeking a qualified vendor to provide personal services to assist in performing the North Dakota Legislative Council's Business Climate Study, in accordance with Section 17 of 2005 Senate Bill No. 2032.

Procurement Officer: John D. Olsrud

SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1.01 Purpose of RFP

North Dakota Legislative Council (NDLC) and Department of Commerce (DOC) are seeking a qualified vendor to provide personal services to assist the NDLC's Economic Development Committee and DOC in conducting the Business Climate Study, in accordance with Section 17 of 2005 Senate Bill No. 2032. The qualified vendor will work under the guidance of another contractor in providing NDLC and DOC with these personal services.

1.02 Contact person, Telephone, Fax, E-mail

The procurement officer is the point of contact for this RFP. All vendor communications regarding this RFP must be directed to the procurement officer.

Procurement officer: John D. Olsrud

Telephone: 701-328-2916

TTY users call: 7-1-1

E-mail: jolsrud@state.nd.us

1.03 Deadline and Mailing Address

Vendors must submit three copies of their proposal. Proposals must be received by NDLC at the location specified no later than 5:00 p.m. (CST) on Thursday, December 22, 2005.

Proposals must be addressed as follows:

NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Attn: John D. Olsrud
Request for Proposal (RFP): Business Climate Study
RFP Number: 160-12-05
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0360

1.04 Assistance to Vendors With a Disability

Vendors with a disability who need an accommodation should contact the procurement officer before the deadline for submission of proposals so that reasonable accommodation can be made.

1.05 Electronic Posting of RFP

The RFP, any amendments to the RFP, and all questions submitted with responses will be posted on the following web site www.legis.nd.gov/RFP. Vendors are encouraged to check that web site periodically for any updates related to this RFP.

SECTION TWO - SCOPE OF WORK

2.01 Background Information

During the 2003-04 interim, the NDLC Economic Development Committee conducted the first business climate study with the assistance of a vendor providing personal services. During the 2005-06 interim, the NDLC Economic Development Committee is continuing this business climate study and is again contracting for personal services from the same individual who provided the services during the 2003-04 interim. During the 2005-06 interim, NDLC seeks to have the vendor who is experienced in the committee's activities train a new vendor, under this RFP, to provide these services for the committee during the 2005-06 interim. Through this RFP, the committee is seeking a vendor that has knowledge with the state's business community, state's economic development system, state's business climate, and state's laws.

2.02 Scope of Work

NDLC and DOC are seeking a qualified vendor to provide services to assist NDLC, DOC, and another vendor who is contracting with NDLC and DOC to provide services for the NDLC Economic Development Committee during the 2005-06 interim. This qualified vendor will work under the guidance of another vendor in planning, facilitating, reporting on, and coordinating followup for the six focus groups and the Business Congress conducted, in accordance with Section 17 of Senate Bill No. 2032.

The tentative dates for the focus groups are:

- Business Leader Focus Group 1, Grand Forks, January 10, 2006;
- Business Leader Focus Group 2, Fargo, January 11, 2006;
- Local Economic Developer Focus Group 1, Fargo, January 11, 2006;
- Business Leader Focus Group 3, Minot, February 7, 2006;
- Business Leader Focus Group 4, Bismarck, February 8, 2006; and
- Local Economic Developer Focus Group 2, Bismarck, February 8, 2006.

The Business Congress must be held before June 1, 2006. The tentative goal is to conduct the Business Congress on April 19, 2006.

The focus groups will discuss ways to enhance the state's business climate to stimulate job growth and enhance economic prosperity for employees and employers by encouraging the growth of existing businesses in the state, creating new businesses in the state, and encouraging expansion or relocation of businesses to the state. The results of each focus group must be compiled in a report to the Business Congress. The report shall include the activities of the discussions of the focus groups, identification of methods to enhance the state's business climate, identification of methods to prepare the state for the high-growth and high-demand jobs of the future, and an evaluation of the impact of existing state economic development programs.

The successful contractor shall work with another contractor, NDLC, and DOC to undertake the following activities:

- Define topics to be covered in the focus groups and the procedures for conducting each focus group.
- Assist in developing the agenda for each focus group.
- Identify participants and distribute invitations.
- Determine the facilities for conducting the six focus groups and the Business Congress.
- Facilitate the focus group discussions and the Business Congress in cooperation with the other contractor.
- Develop the findings and recommendations of the focus groups in cooperation with the other contractor.

- Present the findings and recommendations of the focus groups to the Business Congress in cooperation with the other contractor.
- Develop a legislative package in cooperation with the other contractor.
- Present the findings and recommendations and legislative package to the NDLC interim Economic Development Committee.

SECTION THREE - GENERAL CONTRACT INFORMATION

3.01 Contract Term

NDLC intends to enter a signed contract for this RFP. The effective date will be as soon as possible (no later than January 9, 2006) and the contract will run through December 31, 2006.

3.02 Standard Contract Provisions

The successful vendor will be required to sign a contract. Part or all of this RFP and the successful proposal may be incorporated into the contract. NDLC and DOC reserve the right to add, delete, or modify terms and conditions during contract negotiations. These terms and conditions will be within the scope of the RFP and will not affect the proposal evaluation.

3.03 Proposal Payment Procedures

The State will make payments based on a negotiated installment payment schedule. The State will not make advanced payments before performance by the vendor under this contract.

3.04 Contract Personnel

NDLC must first approve any change of the vendor's project team members named in the proposal in advance and in writing. Personnel changes that are not approved by NDLC may be grounds for NDLC to terminate the contract. The vendor may not assign or otherwise transfer or delegate any right or duty without NDLC express written consent.

SECTION FOUR - EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROPOSAL

4.01 Criteria

The selection evaluation criteria for the RFP are:

1. Cost, with a maximum of \$20,000.
2. Experience of the vendor and any team members assigned to the project.
3. Proposed design of the Business Congress procedures and suggested changes to the focus group procedures.
4. Proposed design of the final report.
5. Familiarity of the vendor with North Dakota's business community, economic development system, business climate, and laws.

4.02 - Experience and Qualifications

Vendors must describe their experience in completing similar projects. Additionally, vendors must provide information specific to the personnel assigned to accomplish the work called for in this RFP. Vendors must provide a personnel roster that identifies each individual who will actually work on the project, including that individual's title, experience, and role in the project.

Vendors must provide references for similar projects the vendor has completed. NDLC and DOC reserve the right to contact any references provided by the vendor. Vendors are invited to provide letters of reference from previous clients.

Vendors must complete a cost proposal. NDLC and DOC are is not responsible for any cost associated with the preparation or submittal of any proposal.